



The Illinois Department of Human Services and Southern Illinois University School of Medicine initiated ***“The Illinois Developmental Disabilities Telehealth Network and Services: A Program Dedicated to Optimizing Health and Support of Community Living”*** on October 1, 2006. This program utilizes telehealth to increase community access to experts specializing in the care of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

This program boundary reaches statewide with first year service covering geographical regions encompassing four privately operated non-profit Community Based Providers and four State Operated Developmental Centers (See map below). Services provided through telehealth will ensure persons with intellectual and related developmental disabilities residing in the rural communities will have access to physicians, psychologists, and nurses, who specialize in this population’s unique health care issues. A comprehensive set of educational services are being provided to assist community health care professionals in the diagnosis and treatment of the complex health care issues associated with persons with intellectual and related disabilities.

Persons with intellectual and related disabilities will benefit through prompt intervention by expert clinicians, minimal physical and emotional stress, and decreased response times resulting in optimal treatment benefits, fewer hospitalizations and the reduced need to consider possible institutionalization. This program increases independence and functional abilities while saving transportation and medical costs. Through continuing medical education and staff development programs, clinicians, direct care staff and supervisors in the 9 State Operated Developmental Centers and over 340 community providers will benefit by improved knowledge and skills made available through this expanded access to training opportunities that support the needs of persons with intellectual disabilities. The telehealth network provides an educational avenue and training forum that strengthens service delivery through greater consistency in the application of best practices across the Illinois DD system. The Illinois Department of Human Services has received a grant through the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services to implement this project over a three year period with first year funding of \$233,959. Comparable amounts are provided for years two and three.

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